

Many Hands, Many Voices, One Mission: Coming Together To Protect Victims

Presented by:
Vicki Bourus, MSW, LISW
Executive Director, SCCADVASA
Belinda Ramsey, Victim Specialist
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Gail Few, President, SC LEVA

Collaboration is:

A mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve results they are more likely to achieve together than alone.

Key Factors for Success

- History of Working together
- Trust
- Members are Appropriate for the Collaboration Effort
- Other Staff Recognize the Benefits
- Interpersonal Skills
- Ownership of Process and Outcome
- Willingness to Deal Openly with Conflicts
- Clear Roles, Responsibilities and Policy Guidelines
- Open Communication

Collaboration is different from “Cooperation” and “Coordination”

Cooperation

- Information provided as needed
- Informal relationship
- Resources are separate

Coordination

- More formal relationship
- Mutual agreement on a task or project
- Shared leadership of task or project
- Resources made available as needed
- Mutual agreement on goals

Collaboration

- Major commitment from leadership
- Creation of Common Goals/Mission
- Reorganized infrastructures
- Clearly defined interrelated Roles
- Comprehensive joint planning
- Increased levels of communication

SCCADVASA/LEVA Collaborative Team

- Debbie Sellars, Spartanburg Public Safety Dept.
- Tina Elliott, York county Sheriff's Office
- Eloise Clements, N. Augusta Dept. of Public Safety
- Dottie Cronise, Richland County Sheriff's Office and Interns
- Kimberly Melton, Suzanne Campbell and Michael Bullock
- Eddie McAbee, Clemson Univ. Police Dept.
- Belinda Ramsey, FBI
- Meri Berrioz, Clemson PD
- Sherrie Smith, Georgetown PD
- Gail Few, Pickens PD and President. SC LEVA
- Stephanie Luther, Chesterfield County Sheriff's Office
- Vicki Bourus, SCCADVASA
- Alicia Rahiem, CASA, Myrtle Beach
- Vanessa Halyard, Lowcountry Children's Center, Charleston
- Deb Haney, Sistercare, Inc., Columbia
- Lorie Boddie, SCCADVASA
- Melanie Branham, PAR, Charleston
- Marla Drummond, SAFE Homes/ Rape Crisis Coalition, Spartanburg
- Joyce Hart, Grand Starnd Community Against Rapre, Myrtle Beach
- Ann Gainey and Millie Hayden, Pee Dee Coalition, Florence
- Consultant: Dr. Beth Saunders-Medlock

In the beginning...



History of Victim Advocacy In South Carolina

- Development Phase – Mid 70's to 90's
- Inadequate Information
- Miscommunication
- Differing Roles and Responsibilities

Recognizing and Addressing the Issues

- SCCADVASA/LEVA Dialogue
- Formation of the Collaborative Team
- Focus Groups
- Results and Recommendations
- Initiating the Development of the Plan

Making Friends



The Team Goes to Work

- Formed the Mission and a Vision
- Set Goals and Objectives
- Refined and Reworked
- Finalized the Plan
- Reviewed and Approved as a Team



The SCCADVASA/LEVA Collaborative Plan

Mission

The mission of the Collaborative is to come together as a united group with mutual respect and professionalism, to focus on efforts to improve relationships to better serve victims.

Vision

The vision of the Collaborative is that Law Enforcement Victim Advocates (LEVA's) and Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (DV/SA) Victim Advocates will work together as a team to best serve victims.



Goals

I. The Collaborative will develop a process whereby LEVA's and DV/SA Victim Advocates have an opportunity to develop relationships and increase the effectiveness of their communication. This will include regular open invitations to attend each association's membership meetings, joint meetings during Victim's Rights Week and ongoing meetings of the Collaborative Team.

II. The Collaborative will develop a standardized job description for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Court Advocates who work in the criminal justice process to be applied consistently across counties and SCCADVASA member organizations. This job description will define the role of the court advocate and will delineate the training requested to serve in the role.



III. The Collaborative will work to build mutual respect within the law enforcement community for both LEVA's and DV/SA Advocates.

Guiding Principles

These guidelines are provided with the goal of encouraging a positive working relationship between Law Enforcement Advocates (LEVA's) and Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Advocates (DV/SA) for the good of the victim while maintaining professional respect for the laws and policies that govern the respective entities.

1. When working with individuals who are victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault both LEVA's and DV/SA Advocates have an obligation to provide safety for the victim and the children.
2. LEVA's and DV/SA Advocates are encouraged to ensure that they themselves and staff of both organizations understand and respect the role, values, capacity, policies, needs and limitations of both entities in order to facilitate effective collaboration.

3. LEVA's and DV/SA Advocates are encouraged to acknowledge the differing needs that they may have and communicate regularly to address these areas of potential conflict.
4. LEVA's and DV/SA Advocates are encouraged to recognize that LEVA's need to have sufficient information to effectively manage the law enforcement case and that DV/SA Advocates may need to keep certain information confidential if it jeopardizes the ability of the victim to maintain safety and make immediate and longer term plans for continued safety.

In the Future ...

The Collaborative will continue to meet in order to address emerging issues, continue to plan, and to mediate differences.



South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Post Box 7776
Columbia, SC 29202
(803) 256-2900
1 (800) 260-9293
Fax: (803) 256-1030
sccadvasa.org